

BASIC TRAINING

PARLIAMENTARY PROCESS, FACTS, AND STRATEGIES

SPOTLIGHT INFO

HOUSE CALENDAR Lists—

- the bills pending on the legislative calendars of the House;
- bills referred under time limitations;
- bills in conference;
- history of bills and resolutions reported;
- days in session; and,
- the status of budget and appropriations bills.

HOUSE JOURNAL

 Sequential listing of legislative activity of the House which is approved on each legislative day.

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD

- Transcript of House and Senate activities.
- Daily Digest summarizes legislative activity in both House and Senate.
- Contains notices and statements required under the rules.



The House Calendar, Journal, and Record

Tracking legislation in the House has become much easier since the advent of computerized databases such as the **Legislative Information System** and **Thomas**. However, the printed documents which contain much of the information in those databases are still printed and circulated every day. The House Calendar provides the current status of legislation in the House; the House Journal is a history of legislative activity and a requirement of the Constitution; and the Congressional Record is a transcript of each day's proceedings in the House. While the online databases provide easy access to a great deal of information about the status of bills, using the original documents can provide a different perspective on activities in the House.

THE CALENDAR

The **Calendar and History of Legislation** is a publication printed by the Clerk of the House on each day that the House is in session. It contains a variety of summary information about legislation pending in the House.

House, Union, and Private Calendars. The Calendar gets its name from the legislative dockets, or calendars in the House. There are three main calendars: (1) the Union Calendar, for legislation raising revenue or requiring an appropriation, either directly or indirectly, (2) the House Calendar, for bills or resolutions that do not qualify for the Union Calendar, and (3) the Private Calendar, for bills and resolutions usually for the relief of individuals or entities. Most legislation is referred to the Union Calendar, while the House calendar is reserved for resolutions relating to internal matters.

Special orders. The first section of the Calendar lists any **special orders** entered into, including post-

poned votes, morning-hour debate, and special order speeches.

Calendars. These sections list the measures reported by committees and referred to the Union, House, and Private calendars. After a measure passes or fails, it no longer appears on the calendar to which it was referred.

Discharge motions. This section lists any pending motions to discharge a committee. It is important to distinguish the discharge motion from a discharge petition; the motion is only recorded in the Calendar once the threshold of 218 signatures appear on a discharge petition.

History of Bills and Resolutions. This section contains a concise history of each bill or resolution reported to or considered by either or both the House and Senate.

Time Limitations. This section of the calendar lists bills which have been referred to other committees under a time limitation, such as a sequential referral or a time limitation of an additional referral.

Bills in Conference. This section lists bills currently in conference with the Senate, including the dates on which both Houses agreed to the conference, as well as a list of conferees.

Calendar. This page is a calendar in the traditional sense of the word, showing on which days during the Calendar year the House was in session. This is a useful reference when counting days for layover or tolling requirements, such as availability of a motion to instruct or a discharge petition.

Status of Major Legislation. This table lists the major budget and appropriations bills, and their status.

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THE HOUSE JOURNAL

Article I, section 5 of the Constitution requires that each House of Congress "keep a Journal of its proceedings" and publish that journal periodically. The Journal is a **sequential listing** of the legislative action of the House, and each day's individual journal is submitted to

the House for its approval between the prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance during the opening business on the next legislative day.

The Journal can be distinguished from the Congressional Record through one major difference — it does not contain a transcript of the debates of the House. Rather, the Journal sequentially lists the legislative actions of the House, including messages, communications, and petitions received, measures con-

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The Congressional Record is a daily transcript of the proceedings of the House, while the House Journal is a sequential record of legislative activity.

sidered, orders granted, rulings of the Chair, and votes taken by the House and Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

The Journal contains a number of indexes, including questions of order, a history of bills and resolutions, and others. Unlike the Congressional Record, recent editions of the Journal are not readily available online.

THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD

The Congressional Record is a **daily transcript** of legislative activity in the House. Unlike the Journal, it contains a transcript of debate, along with inserted extraneous material, and is a current record of the prior legislative day's activity. Because the Record is essentially published in "real time," there are two editions of the Congressional Record: the **daily edition**, which is usually printed overnight, and the **bound edition**, which is printed after the conclusion of a Congress and includes all extensions and revisions in their proper places.

The Congressional Record is divided into four main sections: House, Senate, Daily Digest, and Extensions. The Senate section contains the proceedings of the Senate, just as the House section contains the proceedings of that body.

In the House section, spoken text appears as "roman" text, while remarks inserted pursuant to **general leave** ("5 legislative days to revise and extend") appear in "helvetica" type.

Daily Digest. The Daily Digest is intended to be a summary of the legislative activity for each House on a particular legislative day. Just like the main body of the Congressional Record, the Digest is divided

into a House and Senate portion. Each describes chamber action for the prior day, including bills introduced, committee reports filed, bills and amendments considered on the floor, as well as any committee meetings or hearings held. It also lists committee action expected on the next legislative day.

> Extensions of Remarks. Extensions of remarks are statements submitted for printing in the record either as an extension, specifically for printing in that section, or remarks submitted under general leave on a day subsequent to the debate on a particular item. For instance, if a Member submits remarks on a bill pursuant to general leave on the day after the measure was debated, it will appear in the extension section of

the daily Congressional Record. However, when the bound version of the Record is compiled, the remarks will appear with the debate on the original measure.

OTHER FEATURES OF THE HOUSE SECTION OF THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD

Text of bills and amendments. Any bill or amendment read by the clerk, even if the reading is dispensed with by unanimous consent or rule, appears in its entirety at the place where it was to be read. Similarly, the Rules of the House provide that the text of a conference report appear in its entirety at the point in the Record where it was filed.

Notices and statements. At the end of legislative business for the day, including any special order speeches, the Congressional Record lists legislative activity for the day, including:

- $\bullet \quad \text{ Amendments filed for printing in the Congressional Record;} \\$
- · Bills introduced:
- · Committee reports filed;
- Petitions, Memorials, and executive communications received;
- Statements required by various rules of the House, such as an earmark statement.

While much of this information appears in the Legislative Information System, not all of it is available online, and sometimes the Record is the only place to find that information.